

Linda Clair
Ten-day Meditation Retreat
Kallara Conference Center, Australia – July 2021
Transcription from Audio Recordings

FILE 3A – Introduction to meditation

Linda: So take a few deep breaths into the belly, and feel your body. It doesn't matter how it feels – it might feel uncomfortable, you might feel tired, you might feel emotional – but whatever you're feeling, feel it *in* your body.

And take your attention to the top of your head, feel the sensation on the top of your head however it feels. Feel the sensation of your eyelids on your eyes, your breath going through your nostrils, your lips, your tongue touching your palate, your jaw and your chin. And keep breathing deeply into the belly, even if it's uncomfortable.

As we get into the retreat sometimes you might feel disturbed, but whatever that disturbance is, whatever you think might have caused it, it's in you. Something might have triggered it but nothing has caused it. *You* are responsible for how you feel – nobody else, nothing else. But it's so tempting to blame a situation, a person, for how you feel, whether you feel happy or sad – "It's because of this," or, "Because of that." But this practice is all about taking full responsibility for how you feel, at *any* time. And to keep challenging yourself, using those disturbances, seeing them, feeling them, and taking responsibility. It's very difficult to say, "I am causing my own suffering, I am responsible for my own suffering." But if you realise that you are responsible for your own suffering it means that you are responsible for becoming free from that suffering.

So, feel your shoulders. Even if there is tension, sit with the tension, try not to move. Go to your left shoulder and go down your arm to your left elbow. Then down to your left hand and feel your hand, and feel your thumb and each finger. Go to your right shoulder and go down your arm to your right elbow. Then down to your right hand and feel your hand, and feel your thumb and each finger. Feel both arms and both hands – really feel them, without visualising, feel inside your body. Go to your chest and as you breathe in and out – and it's good to breathe in and out through the nose – feel the gentle movement of your chest in and out with the breath. It might not be gentle; it might be quite strong. Then go down to the abdomen. This is the place where you feel most of your emotion, in your guts, deep down in your body. So, there can be a resistance to going down here. Feel your abdomen rising and falling as your body breathes. Feel your thighs, your knees, your left foot and your right foot. Feel your spine supporting your body. And feel your whole body. Keep this simple – don't complicate it. It doesn't need to be complicated. Each time you realise that you've been thinking, you haven't been in your body, bring your attention back to the rise and the fall of your abdomen with the breath.

And watch, watch very closely. Watch how you try and justify your thinking. Sometimes it takes a supreme effort to let it go, come back to where you are right now, which is here. You're always here, and it's always now.

So, you are going deeply into you – what makes you, what triggers you, what disturbs you. But it's not so much what disturbs you, it's how you deal with it, how much responsibility you can take for it.